

# THE VICTORIA DAILY STANDARD.

VOLUME 6.

THE DAILY STANDARD.  
PUBLISHED BY  
T. H. LONG & CO.

A. DECOSMOS, Editor.

TERMS.

One Year.....	\$10.00
Six Months.....	5.00
Three Months.....	3.00
One Week.....	0.25

WEEKLY STANDARD,  
PUBLISHED EVERY TUESDAY MORNING.

TERMS.

One Year, without postage.....	\$5.00
Six Months.....	3.00
Three Months.....	1.50
One Week.....	0.25

Single Copies.....

12¢

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Dated 23rd day of January, 1873.

JOHN ASH,  
Provincial Secretary

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M. C. G. W. Y.

He excused him-

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in their office

at Victoria.

and published

## The Daily Standard.

Monday, February 17, 1873.

Voting by Ballot.

One of the most important bills passed by the Legislature this session, is the Act to amend the law relating to procedure at elections of members of the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia. In short, it is to substitute the old system of open voting for the ballot. We predict that this alteration in the law will work quite a revolution not only in the method of choosing representatives, but also in the character of the representatives chosen. The outside influences which have heretofore been brought to bear upon electors to sway them in favor of one candidate or another, and which generally gave roughs an advantage over peaceful and orderly citizens, will no longer give them that weight and controlling power at the hustings which they once enjoyed. Henceforth our elections will be conducted with order and propriety, and men will be chosen for their intellectual and moral worth, as they always should be. It is to be regretted that the provisions of the Act do not extend as well to Municipal as to general elections, for certainly they are just as requisite in the one case as in the other. The Act consists of nineteen sections, independently of the schedules, which consist of thirty-six additional sections. The following is a synopsis of the bill: Section 1 defines the title of the Act, which may be cited as "The Ballot Act, 1873." Section 2 enacts that the existing laws relating to elections of members to serve in the Legislative Assembly shall continue in force, and that this Act shall, so far as is consistent with the tenor thereof, be construed as one with them. Section 3 relates to procedure at elections. Votes shall be given by ballot; the ballot shall be an authorized paper showing the names and descriptions of the candidates; each ballot paper shall be printed and numbered, and have a counterfoil attached with the same number printed thereon; the ballot paper, at the time of voting, shall be marked on both sides with an official mark, and delivered to the voter within the polling station, and the voter after having secretly marked his vote on the paper, and folded it up so as to conceal his vote, shall place it in a closed box in the presence of the presiding officer at the polling station. Any ballot paper which has not on its back the official mark etc., shall be void and not counted. After the close of the poll, the ballot boxes shall be sealed up and taken in charge by the returning officer, who shall count the votes, declare the result, and make a return of the same to the Registrar of the Supreme Court. Where an equality of votes is found to exist, the returning officer shall have a casting vote, but in no other case shall he vote at any election. Section 4 makes provision against offences at any election, and prescribes penalties for contraventions of the Act. Every person who—1. Forges or counterfeits or fraudulently defaces or fraudulently destroys any ballot paper, or the official mark on any ballot paper; or 2. Without due authority supplies any ballot paper to any person; or 3. Fraudulently puts into any ballot box any paper other than the ballot paper which he is authorized by law to put in; or 4. Fraudulently takes out of the polling station any ballot paper; or 5. Without due authority destroys, takes, opens, or otherwise interferes with any ballot box, or packet of ballot papers, then he uses for the purposes of the election; shall, upon a summary conviction before a Justice of the Peace, be liable to a fine not exceeding \$100, or to imprisonment for any term not exceeding twelve months. Section 5 enforces secrecy on the part of every officer, clerk and agent in attendance at a polling station; they shall not interfere with voters when voting, nor shall any voter display his ballot paper, after having marked the same, so as to make known how he has voted; and every person who acts in contravention of this section shall be liable, on summary conviction, to imprisonment for any term not exceeding six months, or to a fine not exceeding \$100. Section 6 provides that at any election for an Electoral District, a person shall not be entitled to vote unless his name is on the register of voters for the time being in force in such district. Sections 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 define the duties of returning and election officers. Every returning officer, subject to the provisions of the Act, shall procure all the necessary papers and instruments required at an election, designate the polling stations, appoint and pay officers, etc. Any person misconducting himself at any polling station, may be removed there by order of the returning officer, and not be allowed to enter again during the day without the permission of the presiding officer. Any presiding officer or clerk at a polling station, shall have power to ask questions and administer the oath authorized by law to be asked and administered to voters, etc. Any returning officer, or other officer, guilty of wilful malfeasance of office in contravention of this Act, will be liable to fine and imprisonment. Section 12 provides that no person who has voted at an election shall, in any legal proceeding to question an election return, be required to state for whom he voted. Section 14 repeals section 26 of "The Election Regulation Act, 1871," and in lieu thereof the following is substituted:

"Any person authorizing in writing, but not otherwise, may act as the agent, counsel, attorney, or clerk of a candidate during the continuance of an election; but no such person acting as such agent shall receive either before, during, or after the election from any candidate or from any person whatsoever for acting in any such capacity as aforesaid, any sum of money, fee, office, place, or employment, either for himself or for any other person, or any consideration whatever, or receive any promise, pledge, or security whatsoever for any sum of

money, fee, office, place, or employment, either for himself or for any other person, or any consideration whatever."

"Every person who acts in contravention of the provisions of this section shall be liable on summary conviction before a Justice of the Peace to imprisonment for any term not exceeding six months, and any candidate acting in contravention of this section shall be incapable of being elected or sitting in the Legislative Assembly during the time for which members are elected for the Legislative Assembly then in existence."

Sections 15, 16 and 17 provide against personalization, which shall be punished by fine or imprisonment, and in the case of a candidate, by himself or his agents, who, has aided or abetted or countenanced personalization at any election, upon being convicted thereof, shall be incapable of being elected or sitting in the Legislative Assembly for such electoral district during the Legislative Assembly then in existence. Bribery, treating, and using undue influence at an election is strictly prohibited, and any votes given under such circumstances, upon a summary trial, shall be disallowed. The balance of the Act is composed of two schedules, laying down rules for elections of members of the Legislative Assembly, but as they are intended more particularly for the guidance of officers having in charge the conduct of the elections, we deem it unnecessary here to make any note of them.

SPRING.—The advent of this the most cherished season of the year is marked by the renewed vigor in which nature asserts herself, clothing in her most beauteous garb all creation. Imbued with the inspiring influence of the season and believing that there is a "glorious summer" ahead of us A. B. GRAY has made arrangements to receive monthly consignments of all descriptions of Dry Goods. The Prince Alfred on her last trip brought the first of these shipments, comprising a very choice assortment of the latest and most fashionable styles adapted to every age and dressed with artistic skill. The latest and most fashionable styles of men's and women's hats, shawls, etc., will be given to the latest and most fashionable styles adapted to every age and dressed with artistic skill. The latest and most fashionable styles of men's and women's hats, shawls, etc., will be given to the latest and most fashionable styles adapted to every age and dressed with artistic skill.

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